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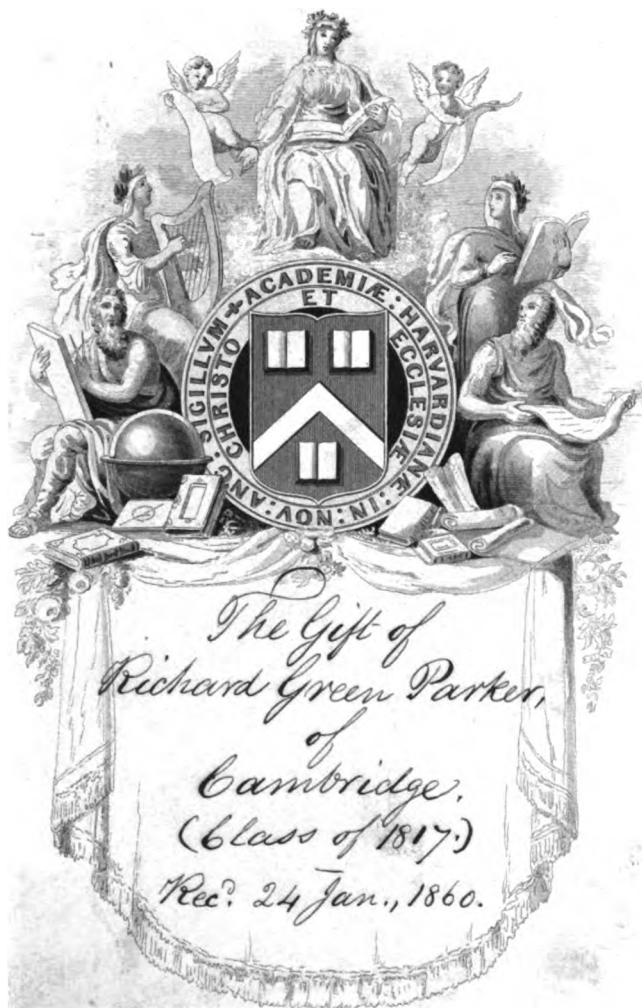


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R. G. Parker

from J. R. Priestley

of London

rec^d July 28th 1836.

THE
ELEMENTS
OF
ENGLISH METRE,
BOTH IN
PROSE AND VERSE,
ILLUSTRATED,
UNDER A VARIETY OF EXAMPLES,
BY
THE ANALOGOUS PROPORTIONS OF
ANNEXED LINES,
AND BY
OTHER OCCASIONAL MARKS.

*A longer or a shorter space of time may be most commodiously and advantageously
represented by a longer or a shorter line.*

PRIESTLEY.

BY RICHARD ROE.

LONDON:

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Richard G. Parker
of Cambridge -
(Class of 1817)

PREFACE.

THE following work on English Metre* is the result of some reading and of more reflection. When the design first occurred to me, I thought myself bound to consult every thing, which might seem likely to afford me assistance; but, finding little in common with my own ideas, I determined, as the easiest course, to exhibit them simply and concisely; encumbered with few refutations; and, for the most part, as if nothing had before appeared on the subject. I concluded, that my system, if true, would, by its greater clearness, carry its own evidence with it; but, if otherwise, that I

* See Note I.

should derive no real superiority from the disparagement of my predecessors. I shall however observe in this place, that I attribute the obscurity, which involves this branch of grammatical learning, to a defective mode of illustration; for which, therefore, it has been my first object to substitute one more adequate to the purpose. The parts and properties of metre are numerous; and yet two or three vague characters are all, that have been commonly employed to represent them. Accuracy, in such a case, would be surprizing!

I am not, however, more disposed to look with confidence on the matter of this work, than to solicit indulgence to the faults of its style and composition. One peculiarity, respecting the latter, perhaps requires a particular apology: I mean, the adopting of the same plan, and frequently of the same language, in three chapters out of the whole four. This was done from an opinion, that elementary works are rendered most perspicuous by the statement of correspondent matter in the same or similar form, both as to paragraphs and phrases. A landscape-painter may draw his buildings in perspective, or throw them behind the shade of other objects; but

the architect, whose office it is to furnish draughts for the workman, should give to every part its exact and undisguised dimensions. A similar practice in writing seems to promise equal advantages, and was moreover thought singularly applicable in the present instance; as each larger portion of metre, successively developed, is in fact little else than a repetition, on a larger scale, of each preceding smaller one.

Upon the whole, I have endeavored to give a clear, concise, and yet comprehensive view of the subject; I have advanced some ideas, which I conceive to be new; and hope, whatever may be the particular defects of my performance, that, while it aspires to the notice of the critic, it will be found well adapted to the instruction of the youthful student.

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INTRODUCTION.

METRE consists of a succession of parts, in subordinate proportions, and within easily calculable limits: which parts, abstractedly considered, are those solely of time or duration; though, for the most part, rendered cognizable through the medium of sounds or motions. Hence metre, as to all its leading or essential characters, is the same wherever found; and all that is adventitious, or extrinsic, is to be sought for in the nature of its vehicle. * Of the different subjects of metre, that of language perhaps claims our first attention, particularly our own or native language; and, as those metrical compositions called verses afford considerable pleasure to most readers, it is therefore proposed, in the present work, to exhibit the *Elements of English Metre*, both in prose and verse, under such a mode of illustration, as seems to furnish the best means for explaining them with simplicity and accuracy.

• See Note II.

A

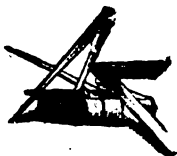
As "all the parts of extension are extension, and all the parts of duration are duration,"* things, of which extension and duration are properties, can be formed into rules, or standards, to measure other things possessing the same properties. Extension and duration admit moreover of such an accommodation, the one to the other, as not only to illustrate, but even actually to measure one another. For though extension, or space, is a property of those things only, of which the parts are coexistent; yet, as duration, or time, is a property both of all things which exist, or can be supposed to exist, in series or succession; so the parts of space, being let into the mind one after another, and thereby made, as to us, to exist in succession, can be brought, as it were, parallel to the parts of duration, and made either to measure, or to be measured by them. Thus, the time of a ship's sailing is made to measure its distance, and the spaces on a dial-plate to measure the hours. A method also, exactly similar to this last instance, is thus furnished, which is perfectly well adapted to the design of this work, and of obvious and easy application.

Agreeably to this, I shall have frequent recourse to my rule and compasses. With that I shall draw a straight line under each example, and with these shall divide it into spaces analogous to the parts intended to be measured; and so, on every occasion, shall frame a rule, or scale, for the reader's use; observing, as is usual on such instruments, to mark the larger divisions by taller strokes, and the

* Locke.

less, or subdivisions, by lower ones. In addition to this the reader is desired, while perusing the examples, to carry the point of a pin, by way of index, with an equable motion over the spaces marked on the lines; and thus, by the joint assistance of what is done for him, and what he is directed to do, he will, I trust, find all that I have mentioned accomplished to his satisfaction.

Metre is divided into *feet*, *lines*, and larger portions; which last, as they are not distinguished in our language by any general term, I shall take the liberty of calling *clauses*. All these again are subdivided into several species, concerning each of which I now proceed to treat in order,



CHAP. I.

OF FEET.

FEET are composed of syllables, which are the primary parts of metre in language; and, according to the number of their syllables, are divided into *disyllabics*, *trissyllabics*, *tetrasyllabics*, *pentasyllabics*, &c. including certain *imperfect feet*, in which rests, or pauses, supply the place of deficient syllables. Of these latter, the principal are imperfect disyllabics; which, for shortness sake, I shall call *monosyllabics*.

It is hard to determine to what number of syllables a foot is limited. A foot, in deliberate reading, takes up about two-thirds of a second, and may therefore contain as many syllables as can conveniently be uttered in that time.* There are no fewer than nine syllables in the tenth foot of the following passage; but, when there are so many, the foot containing them (unless the passage be very slowly read) becomes sensibly retarded.

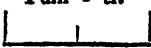
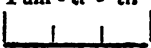

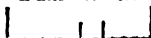
* See Note III.

It is scarce - ly cre - di - ble to what de - gree
 discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride,
 and wis - dom in - ca - tion of sat - te - ry.

Johnson.

Feet, however, exceeding four syllables hardly ever occur in verse.

Feet are distinguished by accent and quantity. Accent is a greater stress, or emphasis, and quantity is a longer continuance, of the voice, in the utterance of one syllable than of the others. The following are examples.

	Tum - ti.	Tum - ti - ti.
Accent.		
	Tum - ti.	Tum - ti - ti. •
Quantity.		

But, as feet distinguished by accent and quantity do not constitute different species of metre, but only give by their mixture an agreeable variety to the cadence; and, as accent is the more general mark of distinction, and also commonly accompanies quantity; so, for the

• See Note IV.

greater ease of expression, I shall mostly speak of the former indiscriminately for both.

It is, in fact, upon a certain property attending our enunciation of the accents, that the whole fabric of English metre rests: that is, upon their equidistance. An equality in some one class of intervals seems essential to metre in general, in order to direct the mind in estimating its other proportions; and yet this remarkable and necessary property, as subsisting in the metre of language, has hitherto been almost overlooked.

From these premises certain consequences follow, deserving particular notice :

1st. That all feet whatever, whether consisting of few or many syllables, are equal.

2dly, That the distinctions of feet are essential, as being founded in the nature of utterance, which fixes the accents at equal and periodic distances; whereas those of all other metres are contingent or arbitrary, as will appear hereafter.

3dly. That the number of accents and of feet, in any line or larger portion of metre, are the same; and hence, that to reckon the accents will always shew the number of the feet.

4thly. That the quantity of the syllables in a foot is determined by their number. Thus, in a disyllabic foot, each syllable, if equal, is to the whole foot as one to two; in a trisyllabic, as one to three, &c. as in example.

Tum - ti.
| |

Tum - ti - ti.
| | |

Tum-ti - ti - ti.
| | | |

And, if any be unequal, the excess of quantity in one syllable effects a proportional diminution in the quantity of one or more of the others; which excess of a syllable is seldom greater than one half, or one third, of its natural length: as in example.

Tum - ti.
| |

Tum - ti.
| |

Tum - ti - ti.
| | |

Tum - ti - ti.
| | |

Tum-ti - ti - ti.
| | | |

Tum - ti - ti-ti.
| | | |


Tum - ti-ti-ti.
| | | |

Of these syllables in general, the first foot may be called even, the second long, and the third short. More attention, however, is due to the accent of syllables than to their quantity; the latter being of a more arbitrary and minute nature. *


* See Note V.

3thly. That, in every series of feet, each accent, strictly speaking, occupies the beginning of a foot; and if, as commonly happens, one or more accented syllables precede the first accent, that they are to be considered as the latter parts of the last foot. For, as they constitute with the last accent, and with the unaccented syllables, if any, which succeed it, but one foot, (which will appear on repeating the series,) they cannot be accounted part of a foot over and above the number of accents in the series: as will be evident from one or two examples.

And o'er the dark her sil - ver man - tle threw. And o'er, &c.




And pi - ous awe, that fear'd to have of - fend - ed. And pious, &c.




It also follows, in like manner, that the unaccented syllables preceding any single accent constitute with it, and with the unaccented syllables, if any, which succeed it, but one foot: as in the following examples.


Com - mand. Com -



Con - ti - nue. Con -



Com - pre - hend. Com - pre -



And hence, of feet either single or in similar succession, that, according to the place of the accent, there are, under each denomination, as many species of feet as there are syllables. I say, in *similar succession*; for, in a series of dissimilar feet, each accent will not admit of being considered in any other situation than the beginning of a foot; as, from the variable number of unaccented syllables in each foot, no other situation can be regularly assigned to it, and so no room left for any other clear and regular distinction between one foot and another: but, in a series of similar feet, each foot, for the opposite reason, will, whether its accented be supposed its first, second, or third syllable, be equally well, because uniformly distinguished.

This distinction of feet, however, by the place, or situation, of their accents, is in a series rather nominal than real; but, as successions of feet, which do or do not begin with an accent, have a perceptibly different effect, so this very nominal distinction is, for its own sake, not without advantage. As also, of such feet, some are more agreeable to the genius of our language than others, I shall accordingly arrange them in the order of their merit: as follows.

An *Iambic*.

Ti - tum.



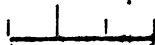
A *Trochee*.

Tum - ti.

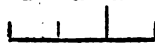


An *Amphibrach*.

Ti - tum ti,

An *Anapest*.

Ti - ti - tum.

A *Dactyl*. *

Tum - ti - ti.



What has hitherto been said of perfect feet applies, in like manner, to imperfect ones; of which many examples will incidentally offer themselves. But, before I quit this part of my subject, it will be convenient to observe, that the situation of a foot often determines its species. The mind, after a train of similar impressions, naturally continues to pursue them, and, under their influence, to overcome small occasional differences; whence it is, that the similar feet, of which verse mostly consists, often reduce others to a conformity with them. Thus, the monosyllabic foot in the following line is reckoned of the dissyllabic species,

Rest - less mor - tals toil for nought.

And that in the following of the trissyllabic.

For he will come without call - ing a - non.

• See Note VI.

B 2

Also diffyllabic and tetraffyllabic feet are found to undergo the like accommodation : as in example.

With a reas'ning the court could ne-ver con-demn.



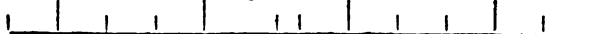
My banks they are fur-nish'd with bees,



Whose murmurs in-vite one to sleep.



"A lit-tle more sleep & a lit-tle more slumber:"



Thus he wastes half his days & his hours without num-ber.



As moreover no description of verse is composed of feet exceeding three syllables, it follows, that imperfect feet are confined within the same limits : or, what comes to the same thing, that monosyllabic feet are those only, which are common both to prose and verse ; and that imperfect trissyllabics, which are the only remaining ones, are peculiar to the latter. It is indeed to be allowed, that a very nice attention to the quantity of syllables will discover rests in all sorts of feet : as, for example, in the following.

It is scarce - ly cre-di-ble to what de - gree.

And o'er the dark her fil - ver man - tie threw.

And o'er the dark her fil - ver man - tie threw.

But this great nicety is quite unnecessary, and such feet are not properly imperfect.

I now come to notice some other feet, differing from the foregoing only in certain accidental variations, altogether peculiar to verse; which, for the better expression of the thoughts, or sentiments, requires us to utter certain accented syllables short, and certain unaccented syllables long: and, as it will be useful to distinguish these syllables from the generality of short and long, I shall call them *accelerated* and *retarded*. Though such, however, be their proper character, they do not always cause the feet, in which they occur, to vary from the common standard of equality; the only cases of this sort being simply those, in which the quantity of other accompanying syllables allows either too much or too little room for their reception. I shall not therefore, for exceptions of so obvious a nature, make any correspondent variation in the divisions of my annexed scale; but, marking every foot alike equal, shall leave the portions beneath these syllables of such lengths, as they may happen to be left by my usual attention to others. That, however, the reader may not mistake the apparent for the real illustration of their quantities, I shall signify

their excess or deficiency by the common typographical marks of long and short : viz. $\bar{}$ for a long, and $\acute{}$ for a short syllable.

The feet to which I have alluded are as follows.

1st. *Short feet*, which are formed by acceleration, and their whole duration thereby diminished : as in example.

Ti - ti.
| |

Ti - ti.
| |

Ti - ti - ti. &c.
| | |

2dly. *Long feet*, which are formed by retardation, and their whole duration thereby increased : as in example.

Tum - tūm.
| |

Tum - tūm.
| |

Tum - ti - tūm. * &c.
| | |

3dly. *Inverted feet*, which are so formed by the concurrence of both accelerated and retarded syllables as to leave their whole duration unaltered : as in example.

Ti - tum.
| |

Ti - ti - tum.
| | |

4thly. *Mixed feet*, which are so formed by the occurrence of short and retarded syllables as to leave their whole duration unaltered : as in example.

Tum-ti-tum.
| | |

* See Note VII.

Feet of this sort must contain at least three syllables.

The particular syllables of prosaic utterance, which the laws of verse bring under the circumstances of acceleration and retardation, will appear from the following remarks.

1st. That there are in fact two sorts of accents; that is to say, strong and weak, as in the following words, *sa'tisfy*, *soci'ety*, *ra'tiōcina'tion*; and that of these the strong only are used to mark the feet in prose, whereas the weak are often so used in verse, and are therein accelerated syllables: as in example.

Prose.

Un - num - ber'd branch - es wa - ving in the blast.



Verse.

Un - num - ber'd branch - es wa - ving in the blast.



Cowper's Task, B. I.

2dly. That two monosyllabic feet never occur together in verse; but that one or the other of what in prose are two such feet, becomes in verse a retarded syllable: as in the following examples.

Prose.

And all their leaves fall fluttering all at once.

Verse.

And all their leaves fall fluttering all at once.

Cowper's Task, B. I.

Prose.

Bow'd their stiff necks, load-en with stormy blasts.

Verse.

Bow'd their stiff necks, load-en with stormy blasts.

Milton's Paradise Lost, B. IV. l. 418.

I know not, in this case, any general rule for determining the retarded syllable. Sometimes it is the less important word, as in the foregoing examples; and sometimes it is decided by the tenor of the metre, as in the following.

Prose.

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens,

bogs, dens, and shades of death.

Verse.

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death.



Milton's Paradise Lost, B. II. l. 621.

3dly. That what is in prose a single monosyllabic foot, succeeding a foot of more than two syllables, becomes in verse, according to the place of the preceding weak accent, the retarded syllable of a disyllabic or longer inverted foot: as in the following examples.

Prose.

The powers of fan - cy and strong thought are theirs.



Verse.

The powers of fan - cy and strong thought are theirs.



Gooper's Task, B. I.

Prose.

Nor pa-la-cies nor e - ven cham - bers escap'd,



and the land rank, so numerous was the fry.



Verse.

Nor pa . la - cēs nor e - ven cham - bers scap'd,

And the land stank, so nu - me - rous wās the fry.

Cowper's Task. B. II.

From what has been now said, the reader will, I trust, perceive the several steps to be taken, in order to analyse, or, as it is called, scan, any portion either of verse or prose; as, however, the clearness of this whole work depends on their being well illustrated, I shall, as follows, annex them more particularly.

First let him, if the passage be prose, mark out all the strong accents by equal spaces, which will indicate the feet; thus:

Un - number'd branches waving in the blast,
and all their leaves fast fluttering all at once.

Then let him divide these spaces into equal parts, according to the number of their included syllables, which will nearly indicate their quantities; thus:

Un - num - ber'd branch - es waving in the blast,

and all their leaves fast flut - ter - ing all at once,

Or, if he would express their quantities more accurately, let him increase those of the longer syllables, and proportionably diminish those of the shorter; thus:

Un - num - ber'd branch - es way - ing in the blast,

and all their leaves fast flut - ter - ing all at once.

But, if the passage be verse, let him comprize two immediate accents within one foot, and mark out all the others, whether strong or weak, into equal feet; thus:

Un - number'd branches waving in the blast,

And all their leaves fast fluttering all at once.

Then let him distinguish the accelerated and retarded syllables of short and long feet by the marks already specified; thus:

Un - number'd branches waving In the blast,
 And all their leaves fãft fluttering all at once.

And laftly, let him, as before directed, exprefs the quantities of all the remaining fyllables, both of thefe and other feet, according to their proportions; thus :

Un - num - ber'd branch - es wa - ving In the blast,
 And all their leaves fãft flut - ter - ing all at once.

And thus, the feveral properties of fyllables being accurately represented, all the other parts and properties of metre, will, as being compofed of fyllables, be more eafily explained and underftood.

The time, or quantity, of grammatical ftops, is independent of that of the fyllables. In fhort, the primary marks of metre are the accents: and, though the equidiftant fucceffion of thefe may be occasionally interrupted, by the too great number of included fyllables, by accelerations and retardations, by grammatical ftops, or by whatever other caufes; ftill the mind, by a natural propenfity to order, always confiders them as equidiftant; and thereby applies them as an intermediate ftandard, to which it refers, and by which it meafures, every lefs and greater portion.

CHAP. II.

OF LINES.

LINES are composed of feet; and, according to the number of their feet, which in our language is from two to six, are divided into *bipeds*, *tripeds*, *tetrapeds*, *pentapeds*, and *hexapeds*.

Lines are distinguished three ways, as follows.

1st. By a stop, or pause, required by some decided member of the sense; and signified by some grammatical mark, such as a comma, semicolon, &c.

2dly. By a stop, or pause, of suspension, breaking in upon the grammatical sense.

Of these, however, the first, or grammatical mode of distinction, is the most obvious, and in general the best. As all measures are designed for the better expression of the sense, the several members

of both should in general coincide ; and hence, notwithstanding the high authority which recommends it, I do not greatly approve the practice of drawing out the sense variously from one verse into another : * a practice, by which the numbers and sentiments appear to be, as it were, at cross purposes. But, as a suspension of the grammatical construction will, instead of injuring the sense, *sometimes* serve to enforce it more strongly, sufficient room is hereby left for the second, or suspended mode of distinction ; as in the following line of Milton.

Myself I then perus'd, and, limb by limb,
Survey'd ; and sometimes walk'd, and sometimes ran.

Par. Lost. B. VIII. l. 267,

Where the suspension marks the line to end with the words "limb by limb," without effecting a decision in the sense ; and so is very expressive of something slow and gradual in the idea expected to complete it : that is, the slowness of the *survey* mentioned afterwards. But, without such suspension, and according to grammatical division, the lines would run more rapidly, and therefore less expressively, thus :

Myself I then perus'd,
And, limb by limb, survey'd ;
And sometimes walk'd, and sometimes ran,

* Preface to Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Both grammatical and suspensive pauses are annexed to all sorts of lines, whether otherwise distinguished or not. The suspensive pause has its best effect, where the metre will not divide readily or agreeably into any other lines than those intended; as is the case in the following examples.

And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd.

Par. Lost. B. XI. l. 192.

Mean while the south wind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove.

Ibid. l. 739.

3dly. By their termination, or the formation of a different foot in the transition from one line to another; which foot is, in iambs, a trissyllabic; in trochaics, a monosyllabic; and, in trissyllabics, a diffyllabic or monosyllabic: as follows.

Ti - tum ti - tum ti - tum - ti,
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

Ti - tum ti - tum ti - tum - ti.
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

Tum - ti tum - ti tum,

Tum - ti tum - ti tum.

Ti - tum - ti ti - tum - ti ti - tum,

Ti - tum - ti ti - tum - ti ti - tum.

Tum - ti - ti tum - ti - ti tum,

Tum - ti - ti tum - ti - ti tum.

Feet being the proximate parts of lines, it follows, that there are, under each denomination, as many species of lines as there are different sorts of feet, or mixtures of feet. Those, however, which occur in verse, consist only of disyllabic and trisyllabic, with the occasional mixture of other, rarely exceeding tetrasyllabic, feet; and are, according to the total absence of mixture, or to the degree of it obtaining in them, divisible into the two classes of *pure* and *mixed*: the former admitting a different foot in the last place only, and the latter in one or more of the preceding also.

Of these, I shall now give examples, proceeding from the shortest to the longest; first apprizing the reader of three things.

1st. That some lines, according to their constituent or terminating feet, being more agreeable to the genius of our language than others, I shall arrange them in the order of their merit: that is, disyllabics before trisyllabics, iambics before trochaics, and lines ending on accented before lines ending on unaccented syllables. Of the two last mentioned species, the former are termed *single-ending*, and the latter *double-ending* lines.*

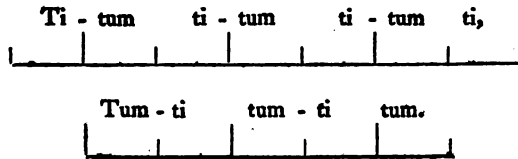
2dly. That a few remarks, confined to the present paragraph, will suffice for anapestics and dactyls; the former differing little from amphibrachics, and the latter being of all lines the least pleasing. Some critics, indeed, attribute greater force, or vigor, to anapests than to amphibrachs; but the diversity will, I believe, be oftener found in the expression of the words than of the metre. What difference, for instance, is observable in the effects of the two following lines?

What na-ture, a - las! has de - ny'd
 | | | | | | |
 To the de - li - cate growth of our isle.
 | | | | | | |
 Cowper.

* See Note VIII.

This similitude is easily accounted for. An initial difference has a weaker effect than a final; because the beginning of a line leaves a more remote, and therefore less, impression on the ear than its ending.

3dly. That two lines are considered as isochronous, or of equal lengths, with reference to their general denominations of bipeds, tripeds, &c. and without regard to any accidental inequalities resulting from their consecution or arrangement. Thus, I call the two following lines isochronous, though one exceeds the other by a whole foot.



But to proceed to the promised examples, of which pure lines occur first in order.

BIPEDS.

Single-ending iambics.

What place is here!

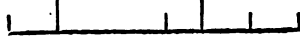


What scenes ap - pear!



A double-ending iambic.

How fair the morning!

**Single-ending trochaics.**

Tu - mult cease,



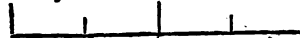
Sink to peace.

**Double-ending trochaics.**

On a moun - tain,



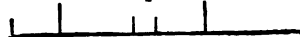
By a foun - tain.

**Single-ending amphibrachics.**

Re - mem-ber the poor,



Who hardships en - dure. •



• See Note IX.

A double-ending amphibrachic,

How charming the prospect!

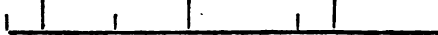


But all these are so short, and comprehend so little, that they are held in very little estimation. The iambic lines are the best of them.

TRIPEDS.

Single-ending iambics.

In places far or near,



Or famous or obscure. *



A double-ending iambic.

Our hearts no longer languish. †



Single-ending trochaics.

Linnets on the spray,



Warble out the day.



* See Note X.

† See Note XI.

A double-ending trochaic.

When our hearts are mourn-ing.



Single-ending amphibrachics.

My banks they are fur-nish'd with bees,



Whose murmurs in-vite one to sleep.



A double-ending amphibrachic.

When ter-ri-ble tem-pests af-fail us.



TETRAPEDS.

Single-ending iambics.

To hear the lark be-gia his flight,



And sing-ing star-tle the dull night.



Double-ending iambics.

Sweet bird, that shun't the noise of fol-ly,



Most mu-fi-cal most-me-lan-choly.



Single-ending trochaics.

Reft - lefs mor - tals toil for nought,

 Blifs in vain from earth is fought.

Double-ending trochaics.

Straight mine eye hath caught nēw plea - fures,

 Whilst the land - scape round it mea - fures.*

Single-ending amphibrachics.

A - broad in the mea-dows to fee the young lambs,

 Rūn sporting a - bout by the fide of their dams.

A double-ending amphibrachic.

Then I'll not be proud of my youth or my beau-ty.

* See Note XII.

PENTAPEDS.

Single-ending iambs.

Ap - pa - rent queen un - veil'd her peer - lefs light,

And o'er the dark her fil - ver man - tle threw.*

A double-ending iambic.

And pi - ous awe, that fear'd to have of - fend-ed. †

Single-ending trochaics.

I - dle af - ter din - ner in his chair,

Sat a far - mer, rud - dy, fat, and fair.

Double-ending trochaics.

All that walk on foot or ride in cha - riots,

All that dwell in pa - la - ces or gar - rets.

Iambic pentapeds are otherwise called *heroics*.

* See Note XIII.

† See Note XIV.

HEXAPEDS.

A single-ending iambic.

Though rest-less still them - selves, a lul - ling mar - rut made. •

A double-ending iambic.

With free - dom by my side, and soft - ey'd me - lan - chö - ly.

Besides the more obvious degrees of estimation, in which these lines are held, depending, as already noticed, on their diversity of structure, others sufficiently observable occur also between lines differing only in length; for which I shall attempt to account as follows. The character of a line is fixed and determinate in proportion to its length, every succeeding foot adding so much to former impressions. Hence double-ending iambs of three feet are more pleasing than those of greater length, the contrast of the last foot being less in them; and hence also trochaics of three and four feet are more pleasing than those of greater length, as appearing less opposite to the genius of our language. An impression of a diverse nature appears less so after a few similar ones than after many; and what is unpleasant becomes less so from being portioned out in small quan-

• See Note XV.

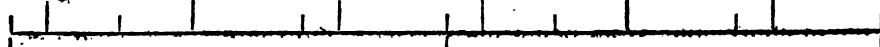
ties; for which reason it frequently happens, that the very same feet which are disagreeable when considered as a single line, become agreeable when considered as two.

An exception, however, occurs to this reasoning, which is, that trochaic tetrapeds are more pleasing than corresponding tripeds. But this results from an accidental coincidence of character between trochaics and tetrapeds, which depends, as I conceive, on the following principles. A strong impression after a weak one excites strong ideas; and a weak impression after a strong one, weak ideas. Again, a single impression, from being unexpected, and therefore causing surprise, and its ideal recurrence in every odd impression of a series, is strong; and a second similar impression, from being expected, and therefore causing no surprise, and its ideal recurrence in every even impression of a series, is comparatively weak. Hence iambs and trochaics, from the order of their strong and weak, that is their accented and unaccented syllables, and hence tripeds and tetrapeds, from the odd or even impression of their terminating feet, possess respectively these opposite characters; from which coincidence between trochaics and tetrapeds, trochaic tetrapeds are rendered more pleasing than corresponding tripeds. From the same principles it follows, that all sorts of iambic tripeds are more pleasing than corresponding tetrapeds; and this, in some degree, appears to be the case; but iambs being, of all feet, the most conformable to our

language, such gradations of excellence between particular lines are accordingly rendered less perceptible.

Another exception is, that *Alexandrines*, though consisting of iambs, are at present never used by themselves; but are only introduced to diversify other lines. The cause of this appears to be, that an Alexandrine is a compound line, being formed of two tripeds; thus:


Though rest-less still them-selves, a let - ling mur - mur made.



Thomson's Cas. of Iud.

Or thus.:

But far is cast the dis - taff, spin - ning - wheel, and loom.



Ibid.

It is indeed true, that all the longer lines are composed of shorter ones; thus, a tetraped can be variously composed of two bipeds, and a pentaped of a biped and tripod, &c. But, in all these cases, the several lines connect with equal unity of effect. Not so the Alexandrine. An hexaped may be formed either of three bipeds or two tripeds; but as, in the former of these cases, the two first or last bipeds commonly unite into a tetraped, the third will, from its shortness, appear weak and detached: as in the following examples.

Or do my eyes mis - re - pre - sent? Can this be he?

Milton's Sam. Agon. l. 124.

Snakes, ad - ders, toads, each loath - some crea - ture, crawls a - round.

Caf. of Ind.

Hence, to avoid this faulty structure, an Alexandrine must have a marked pause in the middle; and, thus appearing uniformly disunited, it would be better written so likewise.

An Alexandrine has its best effect at the conclusion of a stanza.

Examples of mixed lines are now to be given; but, as the mixture of different feet is more used in disyllabics than in trisyllabics, more in iambs than in trochaics, and most of all in heroics, it is judged, that it will be sufficient to give examples in this last mentioned species only.

Examples of a trisyllabic in the place of the first foot.

All what we af - firm, or what de - ny, and call

Our knowledge or opinion

Par. Leg. B. V. l. 107.

Shōt pa - ral - lel tō the earth his dew - y ray.



Par. Loft. B. V. l. 141.

..... or kine,



Or dai-ry, each ru - ral fight, eāch ru - ral found.



Ibid. B. IX. l. 451.

An iambic line, of which the first foot is a trissyllabic or tetra-syllabic, allows sometimes the omission of its initial unaccented syllable ; as follows :

A star nōt seen be - fore in heav'n ap - pear - ing,



Gui - ded the wife - mēn thi - ther frōm the east.



Par. Reg. B. I. l. 249.

And o - ver thēm tri - um - phant Death his dart



Shook, but de - lay'd to strike, though oft in - vok'd.



Par. Loft. B. XI. l. 492.

Onē mān ex - cept, the on - ly son of light

In a dark age, a - gainst ex - am - ple good.

Par. Loft. B. XI. l. 809.

Since firſt her ſā - lu - ta - tion heard, with thoughts

Meek-ly com-pos'd, a - wait - ed the ful - fill - ing:

The while

Par. Reg. B. II. l. 108.

Examples of a triffyllabic in the place of the second foot.

Pour forth their po - pu - lous youth a - bout the hive.

Par. Loft. B. I. l. 770.

..... in thoſe hearts

Lōve ſūn - li - bi - di - nous reign'd, nor jea - lou - ſy

Was underſtood,

Ibid. B. V. l. 449.

..... fo perfo - nă - tîng

Their gods ri - di - cu - lous and them - selves păst shame.

Par. Reg. B. IV. l. 342.

Examples of a trissyllabic in the place of the third foot.

..... af - pi - ring

To fet him - self in glo - ry a - bove his peers.

Par. Loff. B. I. l. 39.

Newton, in a note on this line, makes a distinction between the elision, or cutting off, of a vowel at the end of a word, when the next begins with a vowel, and the pronouncing of a word of two syllables as one syllable or two short ones. Of such elisions, he (with Addison and several others) considers the *y* in the above word "glory" as an instance; and, as instances of contracted syllables, he points out those in the words *spirit*, *ruin*, *riot*, *reason*, *highest*, &c. But this, in fact, is a distinction without a difference, such vowels being never actually cut off in good reading.

To fet him - self in glor' a - bove his peers.

would be a very uncouth recitation.

Sō he with dif - fi - cūl - ty and la - bor hard

Mōv'd on, with dif - fi - cūl - ty and la - bor he.

Par. Lof. B. II. l. 1021 & 2.

..... he faw

The whole eārth fill'd with vi - o - lence and all flesh

Cor-rupting each their way.

Ibid. B. XI. l. 888.

..... on earth lefs known ;

Where glo - ry is falſe - glo - ry, at - tri - bu - tēd

To things - glorious

Par. Reg. B. III. l. 69.

This day will bē re-mark - a - ble in my life.

Sam. Agon. l. 1388.

Examples of a trissyllabic in the place of the fourth foot.

..... thou didst not doom

So strict - ly, but much more to pi - ty in - cline.

Par. Left. B. III. l. 402.

..... of him thou art,

His flesh, his bone; to give thee be - ing I lent,

Out of my side

Ibid. B. IV. l. 483.

..... who shall go

Be - fore them in a cloud and pil - lar of fire,

By day a cloud, by night a pil - lar of fire.

Ibid. B. XII. l. 202 & 3.

Examples of a trissyllabic in the place of the last foot.

There are three ways in which this may happen. The first is when the next line begins with two unaccented syllables, as follows:

..... that day,

Cast out from God and blef - fed vi - sion, falls

Into utter darkness

Par. Leg. B. V. l. 613.

A tetrasyllabic foot often occurs, in like manner, between two trisyllabic lines.

"A lit - tle more sleep & a lit - tle more slumber:"

Thus he wastes half his days & his hours without num-ber.

The second is the simple double-ending iambic already exemplified.

And pi - ous awe, that fear'd to have of - fend-ed.

The third may be called a *treble-ending* iambic; its close occupying either the whole of a trisyllabic, or, if the next line begin with an unaccented syllable, the three first syllables of a tetrasyllabic foot: as follows.

For so - li - tude some - times is best so - ci - e - ty,

And short retirement

Par. Lof. B. IX. l. 249.

Be - sides how vile, con - temp - ti - ble, ri - di - cu - lous, *

What act

Sam. Agon. l. 1361.

But it is to be observed, that, if these three syllables do not run off very smoothly and readily, they will be apt to render the line, to which they belong, of a doubtful, or equivocal, nature. Thus, the first line of the above might well pass for an Alexandrine.

For so - li - tude some - times is best so - ci - e - ty.

its last syllable having a weak accent, as is the case in the following heroic.

A - mong un - e - quals what so - ci - e - ty.

Par. Lof. B. VIII. l. 383.

* See Note XVI.

Examples of a monosyllabic in the place of the first foot.

..... these to their nests

Were sunk, * all but the wake - ful night - in - gale;

She all night long

Par. Lost. B. IV. l. 602.

Mē, me on - ly, just ob - ject of his ire.

Ibid. B. X. l. 936.

This line Bently would alter to

Mē, on - ly me, just ob - ject of his ire.

the common unmixed structure of the heroic. But how much more pathetic Milton's own reading! Let us attend to the stops which grammar requires, together with the pause, which, though it breaks the grammatical connexion, yet, by that very means, strongly helps and enforces the expression. We shall then become more sensible of the uncommon beauties of this line; which seems to partake of all the trouble and perturbation of the speaker;


* See Note XVII.

and even to falter like her voice, who, as the poet tells us, "ended weeping."


Me, me — only, just object of his ire.

To shew besides, that Milton knew what he was writing, and that, if he thought proper, he could himself have framed it otherwise, we need only turn back to line 832 of the same book; which runs as follows.

On me, mē on - ly, as the source and spring




Of all corruption



a line much the same both as to words and sentiment; but in its cadence different, as supposed to proceed from a speaker in different circumstances.


Examples of a monosyllabic in the place of the second foot.

And towards the gate rol - ling her bef - tial train.




Par. Lost. B. II. l. 873.

..... well under - stood



Of Eye, whose eye dart-ed con - ta - gious fire.



Ibid. B. IX. l. 1036.

A monosyllabic foot in verse is directly or immediately representative of rest, silence, cessation, suspension, &c. and a trissyllabic or longer foot of added motion, rapidity, dispatch, &c. Of these two opposite uses of a monosyllabic and trissyllabic foot, we have an instance in the line before us, where the fiery glances of Eve are expressed under the figure of darts, which are always poised or suspended in the hand before they are thrown. Remarks of a like nature might be made on several of Milton's lines here quoted, and on multitudes throughout his works.

The men, though grave, ey'd them, & let their eyes



Rove without rein

Par. Lost. B. XI. l. 585.

Examples of a monosyllabic in the place of the third foot.

..... where thy abundance wants



Par - ta - kers, and un - cropt falls to the ground.



Ibid. B. IV. l. 731.

..... where store,



All fea - sons, ripe for use, hangs on the stalk.



Ibid. B. V. l. 323.

..... firm they might have stood,

Yet fell; re - mem - ber, and fear to transgress.

Par. Lost. B. VI. l. 912.

I do not know another instance, in which the word *and* is made to carry an accent. But with what expression is it here done! The speaker dwells upon the mere connective, and makes a pause after it, in order to excite the greater attention to his concluding remonstrance. Such licences, however, are bold ones, and can be justified only by success. The more natural recitation of the line is as follows.

Yet fell; re-mem-ber, and fear to transgress.

Which, though utterly destructive of the measure, is what a less obvious prevalency of the sense would require.

To whom thus, half a - bash'd, A - dam re - ply'd.

Ibid. B. VIII. l. 595.

Newton, in a note on this line, observes as follows.

“ This verse,” says he, “ might have been turned otherwise,

To whom thus Adam, half abash'd, reply'd.

and many perhaps will think, that it runs smoother thus. But let the reader consider again, whether the verse as it is in Milton, does not better express the shame and modest confusion of Adam."

The monosyllabic foot is immediately representative of the silence and suspense produced by his bashfulness, previous to his making a reply.

..... troubled at his bad suc - cess

The temp - ter stood, nor had what to re - ply.

Par. Reg. B. IV, l. 2;

I have never met with a dissyllabic line containing a monosyllabic foot in the place of the last foot but one, unless perhaps the following of Milton.

Which of us who be - holds the bright sur - face

Of this ethereous mold

Par. Lost. B. VI. l. 472.

But his annotator, Newton, considers the last syllable of this line as accented by poetic licence, and accordingly marks it "surface" in his edition. A monosyllabic foot indeed has not a good effect in this situation.

It is remarkable that, wherever a monosyllabic foot occurs in a disyllabic line, a trisyllabic or longer foot follows, either in the next place, or in the next but one. The former is almost constantly the case, the latter very seldom; that it sometimes, however, does happen, may be seen by the following lines.

On th' o - ther side, A - dam, soon as he heard

The fatal trespass

Par. Lost. B. IX. l. 888.

When all a - broad was ru - mor'd, that this day

Sam - son should be brought forth

Sam. Agon. l. 1601.

And also perhaps by the following, and others like them, of which Milton affords several instances.

..... for the testimony of truth hast borne

U - ni - ver - sal re - proach, far worse to bear

Than violence

Par. Lost. B. VI. l. 34.

And made him bow to the gods of his wives.

Par. Reg. B. II. l. 171.

..... he who re- ceives

Light from a - bove, from the foun - tain of light,

No other doctrine needs,

Ibid. B. IV. l. 290.

From a note of Newton's on the first of these lines, it appears to be his opinion, that they should be thus recited; but the following method is more consonant to just pronunciation.

..... for the testimony of truth hast borne

U - ni - ver - sal re - proach, fār worfe to bear

Than violence

And made him bow to the gods of his wives.

..... he who re - ceives

Light from a - bove, from the foun - tain of light,

No other doctrine needs

and hence I infer, that an accelerated syllable should not follow a monosyllabic foot; as they will more naturally unite into one foot.

From a trisyllabic, or longer foot, thus always following a monosyllabic, we may conclude it to be required by the ear. As, from the nature of articulate sounds, the pause on or after the single syllable might too much weaken the measure, it seems requisite, that the omission of utterance in one foot should be thus counterbalanced by the accession of it in another.

Examples of lines containing two or more trisyllabic or monosyllabic feet.

A - bo - mi - nā - ble, un - ut - ter - ā - ble, and worse

Than fables yet have feign'd

Par. Lost. B. II. l. 626.

..... bent so safe

Some ca - pi - tal ci - ty, or less than if this frame

Of heav'n were falling

Par. Loft. B. II. l. 924.

Groves, whose rich trees wept o - do - rous gums and balm;

O - thers whose fruit, bur-nish'd with gold - en rind,

Hung amiable

Ibid. B. IV. l. 248 & 9.

..... bears, tigers, ounces, pards,

Gambol'd be-fore them; th'un-wiel - dy e - le - phant

To make them mirth

Ibid. B. IV. l. 345.

..... to give thee being I lent,

Out of my side to thee, near-est my heart,

Sub-stantial life

Ibid. B. IV. l. 484.

By li - ken - ing spi - ri - tu - al to cor - po - ral forms.

Par. Leg. B. V. l. 573.

..... ere they could wind

Out of such pri - son, though spi - rits of pu - rest light.

Ibid. B. VI. l. 660.

..... her other part

Still lu - mi - nous by his ray. What if that light

Sent from her

Ibid. B. VIII. l. 140.

O mi - se - ra - ble of hap - py! is this the end

Of this new glorious world

Ibid. B. X. l. 720.

..... in sign

Of for - row un - feign'd and hū - mi - li - a - tion meek.

Ibid. B. X. l. 1092.

Of worth, of ho - nor, glo - ry, and po - pu - lar praise:

Par. Reg. B. II. l. 227.

..... sturdiest oaks

^

Bow'd their stiff necks, load - en with stor - my blasts.

Ibid. B. IV. l. 418.

Examples of lines containing tetra syllabic feet.

..... her aid

Time-ly in-ter - po - ses, and her month - ly round

Still ending

Par. Lof. B. III. l. 728.

..... was set

His mir - ror, with full face borrowing her light

From him

Ibid. B. VII. l. 377.

..... part huge of bulk,

Wallowing un - weil - dy, e - nor - mous In their gait,

Tempest the ocean *Par. Lost. B. VII. l. 411.*

This line, gradually decreasing in rapidity and force, admirably expresses the motion of those immense creatures, which is at first quick and violent; and then soon relapses into that inactivity, which is the usual concomitant of great weight.

..... while the winds

Blow moist and keen, that-ter-ing the grace - ful locks

Of these fair spreading trees *Ibid. B. X. l. 1066.*

Glo - ry he re - quires, and glo - ry he re - ceives

Pro-miscuous from all nations *Par. Reg. B. III. l. 117.*

..... of length within her wall

Se-ve-ral days jour - ney, built by Ni - nus old.

Par. Reg. B. III. l. 276.

..... the people with a shout

Rift - ed the air, clamoring their god with praise.

Sam. Agon. l. 1621.

The only instance of a pentasyllabic foot in verse, which I have met with, is the following.

..... to uphold their state

By worfe than hos - tile deeds, vi - o-lating the ends.

For which

Ibid. l. 894.

In selecting these examples of mixed lines, I have not looked out of Milton, the superiority of his versification being such as to render this my shortest course. Indeed our versification at large has, since his time, greatly declined; owing to a mistaken theory introduced

by his rhyming successors : viz. that each species of line should contain neither more nor less than a certain number of syllables ; as, for instance, that the heroic should be limited to ten. But, in passing this general censure, I must except, in a particular manner, the works of an exalted genius, who has revived, in a great degree, the variety and spirit of our ancient Miltonic numbers. I allude to the late William Cowper ; an author, whose superior style of versification constitutes the least part of the beauty and worth of his poems. Though the examples already given are sufficient for the purpose, I trust it will not be thought other than an agreeable redundancy to add some more similar to them from his blank-verse poem, called *The Task*.

..... in which the willows dip

Their pen - dent boughs, stoop-ing as if to drink.

B. I.

..... the thrush de-parts

Scar'd, & th'of-fend - ed night - in - gale is mute.

Ibid.

..... they are gone

Gone with the re - flu - ent wave in - to the deep.

B. II.

..... I cannot call the swift

And pe - ri - lous light - nings fröm the an - gry clouds.

B. III.

..... nor catch

The par - ral - lăx of yon - der lu - mi - nous point.

Ibid.

Si - nu - ous or straight, nōw ra - pid and now flow.

Ibid.

Thăt he has touch'd rē - touch'd, ma - ny a long day

La - bor'd, & ma - ny a night pur - su'd in dreams.

Ibid.

Ca-ta-racts of dē - cla - ma - tion thun - der here,

B. IV.

Time, as he pass - es us, has a dove's wing.

Ibid.

..... unimpeachable of sin

A - gainst the cha - ri - ties of do - me - tic life.

Ibid.

..... the race

Of the un - de - vi - a - ting and punc - tu - al fun.

B. VI.

..... and im - mers'd

Deep in the flood, found, when he fought it not,

The death he had deserv'd

Ibid.

Two gods di - vide them all, Plea - sure and Gain.

Ibid.

From the number and force of these examples, I trust, that I have fully shewn the effects, which such occasional deviations from the common standard are capable of producing. They are, in some instances, directly or immediately representative of the sense: in others, where this is not the case, they are almost equally expressive, and that frequently of ideas the most opposite; by means of fixing the attention to the part, or parts, of the line, where they occur:* and, even where least productive of these effects, their value is not little in the variety and vigor, which they give to the cadence; and in the removal of that weariness, which a series of perpetually similar impressions must ever occasion to the ear.

Having said, that the mixture of different feet is more used in disyllabics than in trissyllabics, more in iambs than in trochaics, and most of all in heroics; a few words endeavoring to account for this practice will perhaps be acceptable.

1st. They are more used in disyllabics than in trissyllabics. As a disyllabic line is weakened by a monosyllabic foot, so a trissyllabic line is weakened by a disyllabic, or imperfect trissyllabic foot. Thus the following lines are rather disjointed.

* See Note XVIII.

With a reas'a-ing the court could ne-ver con-demn.



Cowper.

Which a-mounts to pos-ses-sion time, out of mind.*



Ibid.

Whence it follows, that tetrasyllabic or longer feet can alone counterbalance the deficiency; but, these being of less usual occurrence, the mixture depending on them must be so likewise.

2dly. They are more used in iambs than in trochaics; the accession of strength derived from trisyllabic feet agreeing better with the bold and vigorous character of the former, than with the smoothness and ease of the latter.

3dly. They are most of all used in heroics; because, from their superior length, they possess a more established character, which makes them capable of such changes without altering their specific nature, or marring the beauty of their cadence.

* See Note XIX.

CHAP. III.

OF CLAUSES.

CLAUSES are composed of lines, and according to the number of their lines, which is mostly from two to four, are divided into *couplets, triplets, and quadruplets.* *

Clauses are distinguished four ways, as follows.

1st. By a stop, or pause, required by the sense; which, if its component lines be so distinguished, should commonly be that of a larger member.

2dly. By a stop, or pause, of suspension; which mode is, however, unusual.

3dly. By termination; or the formation of a different line in the transition from one clause to another: as follows.

* See Note XX.

Titum titum titum titum;

Titum titum titum ;

Titum, &c.

4thly. By rhyme in various positions ; but this method being so well known, renders its exemplification unnecessary. *

With these may be classed other metres, which are distinguished after the same manner, and differ from them only in extent ; as being formed from them by addition, or combination. But here it is to be observed, that, as this combination accumulates, the proximate parts become fewer. The ear, like the eye, commands only to a certain extent, and separates or unites objects of an intermediate size with more facility than either the minute or the great. Thus in lines the ear can readily notice the joint or several effects of five or six proximate parts ; but in feet and clauses attends but little to those beyond four. Both eye and ear are also affected as well by the nature as extent of their objects, the combination of similar parts becoming sooner indistinct than of dissimilar.

Lines being the proximate parts of clauses, it follows, that there are, under each denomination, as many species of clauses as there are lines or mixtures of lines. Those, however, which occur in verse, are much more limited in number ; and are divisible into the two classes of *similinear* and *diversilinear* : that is, into clauses composed of similar or different lines.

• See Note XXI.

Of similinear clauses, it will be needless to give any examples; as a uniform succession of such portions (except in rhyming verse, where couplets or quadruplets chiefly prevail,) is disregarded.

Of diverfilinear clauses, or, as they are commonly called, *stanzas*, a great variety are used in our language. But, though many, they admit of some addition; and, though mostly accompanied with rhyme, they are but little indebted to this ornament. Indeed, it appears rather unaccountable, that the heroic should be the only form of verse, which is allowed the liberty of sometimes moving without the fetters of rhyme; for, even waving the opinion, that any species of verse, which is well supported without it, must yield a more refined pleasure to the ear than those, in which it is retained, I think the cases must be very few, if any, in which the disuse of it is inadmissible. But, as a few examples are likely to have more weight than many arguments, I shall accordingly offer the following.

Come forth, ye nymphs! come forth,
 Forfake your watery bow'rs,
 Forfake your mossy caves,
 And help me to lament —

Spencer's Mourning Muse of Thestylis, l. 1. &c.

O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth, unparallel'd!
 The rarer thy example stands —

Sam. Agon. l. 164, &c.

So fond are mortal men,
 Fall'n into wrath divine,
 As their own ruin on themselves t'invite.

Ibid. l. 1682, &c.

He led me on to mightiest deeds,
 Above the nerve of mortal arm,
 Against th' uncircumcised our enemies.

Ibid. l. 638, &c.

The sun to me is dark,
 And silent as the moon,
 When she deserts the night,
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.

Ibid. l. 86, &c.

Unless he feel within
 Some source of consolation from above,
 Secret refreshings, which repair his strength,
 And fainting spirits uphold.

Sam. Agon. l. 663, &c.

While Spring shall pour his show'rs as oft he wont,
 And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
 While Summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy lingering light ;

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
 Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
 Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And love thy favorite name.

Collins's Ode to Evening.

Behold th' extended ocean,
 Whose restless mafs of waters,
 In multitudinous billows,
 High foaming, smites the fummits
 Of loftiest rocks, rebellows
 Amid their winding caverns,
 Or drops its baffled fury,
 In faint expiring efforts,
 Along the unrefifting sands,
 That skirt the circling shore.

The bee in curious cells
 Her mingled sweetness stores,
 And lays her numerous progeny ;
 In cradle of gayest blooms,
 The infant fruitage sleeps,
 And ripens into blushing gold :
 So in a lovely form should dwell
 The growing virtues of a lovelier mind.

Hither direct your steps —
 Within this mofs-clad cot,
 (Retir'd beneath the boughs of spreading trees,
 Whose interposing shade
 Defends it from the fun's too ardent rays,
 Or tempests' threatening force, or sudden show'rs,
 That, aided by the blast, for entrance strive,)

Behold ! a calm retreat,
 To Love and Friendship dear,
 Nor less by longly Meditation sought.
 They deem its quietude
 Congenial to their sweetest energies,
 And largely prize the pleasures it affords :
 The greatest oft from simple causes spring.

But, ah ! th' inviting scene,
 When by its mistress grac'd,
 At once exalted and forgotten seems —
 Sweet maid ! whose gentleness,
 Whose modest sense, whose unaffected worth,
 Delight in converse every feeling heart,
 And harmonize her own in solitude.

These lines to her, who holds,
 Within this tender breast,
 Far more than nature claims ;
 More than a sister's largest share
 Of truest friendship, and of fondest love.

Think not a scanty space
 Of intervening earth
 Can part united minds :
 Though I the body's absence prove,
 In spirit present, I am still with thee.

Would I were all thy hand,
 With partial industry,
 And flattering colors, drawn!
 Oh! would I were for thee!—yet list,
 If aught I sing deserving of thy ear.

Beware, in time beware,
 Imaginations wild,
 And vain Opinion's dreams:
 Lo! dark Delusion lurks behind,
 And crowds of monstrous errors swell her train.

All things are vanity,
 All things idolatry,
 Sought for themselves alone:
 Nor beauty, nor accomplishments,
 Nor genius, science, art, can make thee blest.

Learn then humility,
 Learn to deny thyself,
 Learn to take up thy cross;
 And, following in a Saviour's steps,
 Thou'lt find the path of wisdom and of peace.

Perhaps the practice of drawing out the sense from one line into another, before censured, is what has chiefly prevented the success of the few attempts, which have been made towards a more general introduction of blank verse; this impropriety, through the prevalence of custom, being rendered less obvious in blank heroic verse than in any other. On this account the greater part of Milton's choruses, and of Collins's Ode to Evening, are, I think, less agreeable than the passages here quoted from them. But to return —

It is possible, by a regular process, to discover a multiplicity of agreeable stanzas: that is to say, as follows,

1st. By permutations of all the different lines already exemplified, two and two, three and three, &c.

2dly. By repeating one or more of the lines forming stanzas of the foregoing description.

3dly. By various combinations of two or more stanzas belonging to either or both of the foregoing descriptions.

The beauties or defects of these stanzas will, in their various degrees, depend on the properties of their constituent lines, and the effects, which, according to their mode of arrangement, they will have on one another. Thus, some lines are more and others less

agreeable to the genius of our language: some lines have a smooth, and others a rough or broken transition from one to another: some lines have too much and others too little similarity: some lines, from their flowing structure, are best adapted to the preceding parts of a stanza; others, from their decision, to its close; and others, from their middle character, alike to either. This subject, however, on account of its intricacy, I shall not pursue farther than to observe in general, that a stanza should have a simple and uniform effect, lines of one kind or character being made to predominate, and others introduced only for variety; that its close, in particular, should consist of such lines only as are most agreeable, and should give to the whole a graceful and finished effect. Minuter observations would perhaps be useless, as their extent and application must, for the most part, depend upon a writer's own taste respecting the several cases of metre, language, and sentiments, that may come before him. *

Stanzas are used three ways. First, where the stanzas are all similar; secondly, where they are all different; and thirdly, where both similar and different are brought together, and arranged according to a certain plan. Of this last description, there is a particular form, called *Pindaric*, from being that mostly used by Pindar, and is as follows. The whole number of stanzas is contrived to be

* See Note XXII.

a multiple of three, or to be composed of what are called ternaries; of which every two first are similar, and every third different from them, but similar to one another. As, however, other forms seem to be equally admissible, I shall venture the following as a blank verse example.

I. 1.

A mighty wind o'erflows the hills,
 And pours its current down the vale —
 How yonder massy forest stoops
 Beneath its fury!
 And, lo! on the indignant main,
 What agitation of its waves;
 Or tossing high their foamy heads,
 Or dashing 'gainst the shore.

I. 2.

Onward in billowy gusts,
 Th' imperious tempest rushes,
 And aught its force withstanding fiercely affails:
 Of mingled strife the clamorous voices rise,
 And, in rude peals, invade th' alarmed ear.

II. 1.

But, upward turn'd, th' admiring eye
 Far other prospect meditates :
 The moon, fair governess of night,
 Walking in brightness ;
 And, scatter'd o'er the vast expanse,
 Th' innumerable multitude of stars —
 With what calm aspect they appear
 To view the storm below.

II. 2.

While musing o'er both scenes,
 While thus both scenes contrasting,
 My fervent spirit ejaculates, " Oh ! when,
 From the serener heights of mental peace,
 Shall I look down on life's tumultuous cares ! "

CHAP. IV.

OF METRE IN GENERAL.

HAVING exhibited the foregoing view of the several species of verse, I shall conclude with a more general one of prose and verse together ; in order to an explication of their distinguishing properties, and estimation of their particular merits. This purpose will be most readily effected by a comparison of two passages, consisting of the same words or syllables, and differing only in that arrangement, which is peculiar to each : as follows.

Prose.

Hail, there - fore, pa-trons of con-tem-pla-tion, of health and ease,

heart solacing joys, and harm - less plea-sures,

an-known in the throng'd a - bode of mul-ti-tudes!

hail, ru - ral life!

Verse.

Hail, there - fore, pa - tro - ners of health and ease,

And cön - tem - pla - tion, heart - so - la - cing joys,

And harm - less plea - sures, in the throng'd a - bode

Of mul - ti - tudes un - known! hail, ru - ral life!

Cowper's Task, B. IV.

Prose.

The red - breast still warbles;

but is con - tent with slen - der & more than half sup - pears'd notes.

The red - breast war - bles still; but is con - tent

With slen - der notes, and more than half sup - pears'd.

Verse.

The red - breast war - bles still; but is con - tent

With slen - der notes, and more than half sup - pears'd.

Ibid. B. VI.

Prose.

Then I will not be proud of my beau-ty or my youth,

since both of them fade and wi-ther;

but gain a good name by do-ing my du-ty well:

This, when I am dead, will scent like a rose.

Verse.

Then I'll not be proud of my youth or my beau-ty,

Since both of them wi-ther and fade;

But gain a good name by well do-ing my du-ty:

This will scent like a rose, when I'm dead,

Watts,

From this comparison it appears, that the difference between prose and verse consists chiefly in the following particulars.

1st. That accelerated and retarded syllables belong exclusively to verse; the former being in prose always attached to the preceding accent, and the latter always becoming accented syllables themselves. Hence accelerated and retarded syllables are such only in comparison with other syllables possessing similar situations in verse; and not at all, but rather the reverse, in comparison with their natural lengths in prose. Hence also the very same order of syllables may often, according to the mode of recitation, become either prose or verse; as has already appeared in the latter part of the first chapter.

2dly. That the feet are in verse either wholly or mostly of one kind, which is either dissyllabic or trissyllabic; verse bringing the syllables to a greater degree of equality, and consequently of smoothness in the utterance.

3dly. That the lines and larger portions are in verse either reduced all to one kind, or, if of different kinds, intermixed with more regularity.

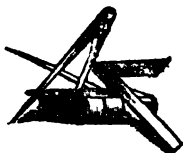
Perhaps this and the foregoing distinction are not, strictly speaking, essential; and yet the practical diversity, in these respects, between prose and verse is so great as to require some notice, though it is difficult to ascertain its precise limits. We have prose, which almost equals the harmony and order of verse; and we have but too much verse, which hardly deserves the name. Lowth's trans-

lation of Isaiah affords eminent examples of the measured prose here alluded to.

Lastly, feet, lines, &c. are not in prose regarded as such, and occur in it only as necessary effects of the nature of utterance, and the constructional members of language; but in verse these several portions are wrought into such forms as are most grateful to the ear, and best calculated to enforce expression. In short, prose is more natural, and verse more artificial.

The difference of structure subsisting between prose and verse, and between the several kinds of verse, begets an equal difference between them with respect to expression. Prose, from the mixed nature of its parts, can in general have but little variety adapted to the character of different subjects; verse, on the contrary, from the multiplicity of its species, admits of as multiplied an application. Thus dissyllabics are adapted to grave, and trissyllabics to lively subjects: iambics to the strong and forcible, and trochaics to the soft and flowing: similinear verse to subjects, of which the periods, or paragraphs, are of various lengths: and diversilinear, from the greater regularity and distinctness of its larger portions or stanzas, to subjects, of which the periods are nearly equal; where there are many comparisons or antitheses; where there is, at stated intervals, a recurrence of the same thought or turn of words; or where the parts, however more variously distributed, form among themselves

some orderly and methodical dependence. But, though such, in the abstract, be the nature of the different sorts of metre, it happens, that the difference of their effects is very much diminished in actual composition. Such is the force of the ideas annexed to words, that they always act upon the mind, in a great measure, independently of, and sometimes even in opposition to, metrical impressions; and such the structure of language, or of the words themselves, as often to make it very difficult to mould them into the most expressive metre. These reasons prescribe limits to the cultivation of verse. The former circumstance will often render much refinement needless, the latter will often render it abortive. Talents for this art may doubtless be cultivated; but the nature and difficulty of the subject will always recommend to the possessors due restraint and proper moderation.



NOTES.

NOTE I. p. iii.

I HAVE adopted the word *metre*, as at once the most general, and most appropriate to my work, that I could find. The term *profody* being that commonly used in the titles of books treating solely of versification, carried with it, I thought, a signification too restricted to make it equally suitable to a more comprehensive subject.

NOTE II. p. i.

Thus it happens, from the peculiarities of structure and order in the words of different languages, that certain forms of metre, which are received in one are rejected in another; and even where the forms are the same, that what is pleasing in one shall be unpleasing

in another. But these diversities will not in any language extend so far as to obtain universally: on the contrary, a striking similarity will be observable in many instances. There are, perhaps, no languages, which differ more in the points I have mentioned, than the Greek and Latin do from those of modern times; yet, on a comparison, many parallel movements present themselves. As it may be acceptable to the reader to see some examples of this nature, I shall, among the ensuing notes, produce such passages of Greek and Latin metre as tally with others in our language; dropping a few words, now and then, on their agreement or disagreement in character.

NOTE III. p. 5.

The way in which I endeavored to average the usual length of a foot was as follows. I observed, by the second hand of a clock, how long I was moderately reading a passage in poetry, and then divided the number of seconds by that of the feet; and, to render the average more general, I did the same with a passage in prose, and struck a medium between them, which I found about two-thirds of a second.

NOTE IV. p. 6.

The feet, in Greek and Latin, appear to have been distinguished by quantity only; but, ours being distinguished both by accent and quantity, we possess, as Sheridan well observes, duplicates of each foot, agreeing in movement, though differing in measure.

NOTE V. p. 8.

When the accent is on a vowel, the syllable is often long; and, when on a consonant, even. The reverse, however, happens (at least in the former instance,) so frequently, as to make a general rule almost impossible. Thus, in the following line,

O'er heaps of ru - in stalk'd the state - ly hind.


though the second accent is on a vowel, the syllable, which carries it, is even. Unaccented syllables (except in one case, that will be shewn hereafter,) are always either even or short.

NOTE VI. p. 11.


These names have been borrowed from the Greek, and, being not improperly descriptive, are here retained. A *trochee* is so called from *τρέχω*, to run, on account of its smooth and flowing nature. An *amphibrach* from *ἀμφί* and *βραχύς*, that is, *on each side short*, as being formed by a short or unaccented syllable on each side of a long or accented one. An *anapest* from *ἀναπαύω*, to repeat, as being formed by two short or unaccented syllables preceding a long or accented one. And a *dactyl* from *δάκτυλος*, a finger, because in this foot a long or accented syllable precedes two short or unaccented ones; as, in a finger, the joint next the hand is longer than the two that are united to it. The word *iambic* is of doubtful etymology.

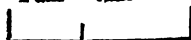
NOTE VII. p. 14.


Should the reader not be satisfied with this representation of accelerated and retarded syllables, he can easily suppose it changed for the following.


Ti - ti


Ti - ti


Ti - ti - ti &c.
 &c.

Tum - tum


Tum - tum


Tum - ti - tum &c.


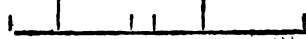

My reason for preferring the method given in the text is, that it shews both what their quantities really are, according to just pronunciation; and what they ought to be, according to exact metre: the former being signified by the marks over them, and the latter by the portions of the divided line below them.

NOTE VIII. p. 25.

The propriety of these terms may be justified from considering, that the final accent makes so forcible an impression, as to give another syllable the appearance of being supernumerary. Single-endings are most common in English and French, and double-endings in Italian, Spanish, and German.

NOTE IX. p. 27.

To this the following line corresponds.

Re - mem-ber the poor.

 Dē - fle - te vi - rum.


but the English line is less forcible.

NOTE X. p. 28.

To this the following line corresponds.

In	pla - ces	far	or	near,
Mu - fæ	Jo - vis	gna - tæ.		

NOTE XI. p. 28.

To this the following line, called the *Anacreontic*, corresponds.

Our	hearts	no	lon - ger	lan - guish.
Θε - λω	λι - γιν	A - τρη - δας.		
Vo - lo	fo - nare	A - tri - das.		

Lines of this sort, in the Greek and Latin, are mostly applied to subjects of a light and airy cast; but in English they seem equally well suited to the energetic or the delicate.

NOTE XII. p. 30.

Among the Greek and Latin lines there are three, which correspond to the first, second, and third of those here given; and that in character perhaps as well as form. The following are examples.

To hear the lark be - gin his flight.

Ut pri - ca gens mor - ta - li - um.

Sweet bird that shun't the noise of fol - ly.

Cla - ri gi - gan - te - o tri - um - pho.

Rest - less mor - tals toil for nought.

Tru - di - tur di - es di - e.

and if we be allowed to divide the following line as it naturally divides itself, we shall observe in the prior half a line as closely cor-

responding to the fourth, and one moreover to the third in the latter.

Fróm the reach of this con - ta - gion

Ex - te - ðw ðau - ðw te - lí - tuis

Fly, I warn you all to fly.

Ted e - xau mi - áis - me - tó.

NOTE XIII. p. 31.

To this the following line corresponds.

And o'er the dark her sil - ver man - tie threw.

Mu - sa so - ro - rēs Pal - la - dis, lu - gent.

NOTE XIV. p. 31.

To this the following line corresponds.

And pi - ous awe, that fear'd to have of - fend-ed.

No - va - que per - gunt in - te - ri - re la - nae.

NOTE XV. p. 32.

To this the following line corresponds.

Though rest - less still them - selves, a lul - ling mur - mur made.

Be - a - tus il - le, qui pro - cul ne - go - ti - is.

NOTE XVI. p. 42.

This sort of termination corresponds to that of the *verso sdrucciolo*, or *slippery line*, of the Italians.

NOTE XVII. p. 43.

A monosyllabic foot occurs frequently in Greek and Latin verse; but is more fixed in these languages to particular parts of a line.

The line called the *pentameter* contains two of these feet; and of course differs from the *hexameter* in form and character only, and not in the number of its feet: as can be easily seen on a comparison.

Fle - bi - lis	in -	dig - nos	e - le -	ge - a - a	sol - ve ca - pil - los:
<hr/>					
Heu ni - mis	ex	ve - ro	nunc ti - bi	no - men e - rit!	
<hr/>					

The following lines also contain these feet,

Mæ - ce - nas	a - ta - vis	e - di - te	re - gi - bus.
<hr/>			
Gens hu - ma - na	ru - it	per ve - ti - tum	ne - fas...
<hr/>			
Tu ne	quæ - si - e - ris,	sci - re	ne - fas,
<hr/>			
quem mi - hi	quem ti - bi.		
<hr/>			

with some others, that might be produced.

NOTE XVIII. p. 59,

See, in particular, *Par. Lost*, B. IV, l. 731, and B. V. l. 323, among the foregoing examples,

The expression of the following lines is owing to a similar cause.

Vertitur interea cœlum, & ruit oceano nox.

Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.

“There must,” says Johnson in one of his *Ramblers*, “be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly expressed by the same form and termination of the verse.” But the conformity, which this irony supposes necessary, is not at all so; the expression, in each instance, being solely effected by the unusual situation of a monosyllable at the end of an hexameter; which, by fixing the attention to the word, serves to enforce the idea, which it signifies,

NOTE XIX. p. 60.

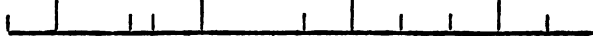
Yet it is possible, by a judicious management, to convert even such blemishes into a source of expression: as follows,

Once on a time, as old stories rehearse,

A friar would needs shew his talent in Latin;

But was sorely put to't in the midst of a verse,

Be - cause he could find no word to come pat in.



Swift.

where the deficiency in the second foot of the last line is very significant of the poor friar's perplexity.

NOTE XX. p. 61.

Couplets and quadruplets are otherwise called *distichs* and *tetraf-tichs*.

NOTE XXI. p. 62.

Rhyme, in the opinion of some critics, is so necessary an ingredient of our versification, that blank verse, according to them, is verse only to the eye. "The music of the English heroic lines," says Johnson, "strikes the ear so faintly, that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together; this co-operation can only be obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another, as a distinct system of sounds; and this distinctness is obtained and preserved by the artifice of rhyme."* The fact however is, that rhyme does not distinguish lines, but clauses. The end of a line is not perceived, by means of the rhyme, till we come to the end of that, which chimes to it; which is, at least, not till the end of a couplet; or, if the first rhyme be at a more remote interval, not till three or more lines are completed. I would therefore ask, whether the ear discovers the terminations of preceding lines by a retrospective comparison of final sounds, or whether it is already apprized of them by other means: I rather think the latter. It must indeed be confessed, that some of our lines do not possess sufficient distinctness; but rhyme, in my opinion, supplies neither an adequate nor a desirable remedy for this defect.

* See the critical remarks subjoined to his life of Milton.

NOTE XXII. p. 70.

The stanzas commonly used among the ancients are few in number, and very different from any of ours; unless we are allowed to consider certain portions of metre, always written by them in one line, as more naturally divisible into two; in which case we may notice a resemblance: as in the following examples.

Fröm the reach, &c.
 ————
 Ex - ce - ðeñ, &c.
 ————

as already quoted in Note XII.

He says he is three - score and ten,
 ————
 Re - mit - te pal - li - um mi - hi.
 ————
 But o - there say he's eigh-ty.
 ————
 Me - um quod in - vo - laf - ti.
 ————

Happy, thrice hap - py he,

Be - a - tus il - le, qui,

Re - mote from pub - lic cares,

Pro - cul ne - go - ti - is,

Who, like the prif - tine race of men,

Ut prif - ca gens mor - ta - li - um,

With his own ox - en tills

Pa - ter - na ru - ra bo-

His ru - ral he - ri - tagē,

bus ex - er - cet fu - is,

Ex - empt from bi - ting u - fu - ry.

Ex - emp - tus om - ni foe - no - re.

FINIS.

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ERRATA.

Page.	Line,	For	Read
5.	3.	<i>diffylabics</i>	<i>diffyllabics</i>
16.	10.	<i>Milton's Paradise Lost.</i>	<i>Milton's Paradise Regained.</i>
19.	8.	comprize	comprise
23.	8.	192.	491.
Ibid.	11.	739.	738.
33.	1.	reafon	reasons
36.	10.	wife-mēn	wife mēn
Ibid.	11.	249.	250.
37.	8.	Pour	Pōur
43.	5 & 8.	of	ōf
48.	14.	far	fār
49.	4.	290.	289.
55.	10.	ends,	ends,



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